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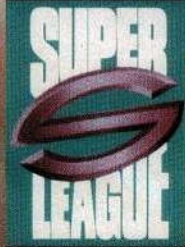
**OLDHAM BEARS v
QUEENSLAND COWBOYS**
VOLUME 1 No 9 £1.50

Friday 18th July 1997 K.O. 7.30pm

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DOWN MEMORY LANE

DON YATES

DON YATES LOOKS BACK TO A MATCH FROM YESTERYEAR

Although tonight we welcome to Boundary Park the first Australian club side to visit Oldham, there have been seventeen visits from the Kangaroo national team. Oldham have won only four of those matches, in 1908, 1911, 1922 and 1956 when the Roughyeds beat the Kangaroo 21-2 during the season Oldham went on to lift the Championship. That 1956 tour was a disappointment for the Kangaroos who lost seven matches against club opposition as well as the test series. Australia have certainly improved since then. After losing to Widnes in October 1978, the Kangaroos have registered 43 straight wins over British club sides. The last time the Kangaroos visited Oldham was in 1986 when those tourists repeated the feat of the 1982 Kangaroos and completed the tour with a 100% record. One of the toughest matches for Australia during that 1986 tour came up at Watersheddings where a crowd of 5,678 attended to see the Kangaroos take on an Oldham side who, at that

time, were a match for anyone. The match was played just four days before the second test so the Australian team contained only five players who were included in the following Saturday's test line-up. Nevertheless the only player in their team who failed to play test match rugby was loose-forward Paul Langmack and between them their line-up amassed 198 test caps. Their team that evening, together with their test appearances, was as follows:

Gary Belcher (15), Mike O'Connor (17), Mal Meninga (45), Chris Mortimer (1), Dale Shearer (20), Terry Lamb (7), Greg Alexander (6), Martin Bella (9), Ben Elias (5), Phil Daley (3), Les Davidson (4), Steve Folkes (5), & Paul Langmack. Substitutes, Gary Jack (20)

& Paul Sironen (21) Oldham's team contained six players with test experience, a Moroccan international and three Australians determined to put one over their compatriots. Jeff Edwards; Paul Sherman, Des Foy, Gary Warnecke, Hussain M'Barki, David Topliss, Ray Ashton; Bruce Clark, Terry Flanagan, Neil Clawson, David Hobbs, Mick Worrall & Stuart Raper. Substitutes Colin Halkyard & Tom Nadirole.

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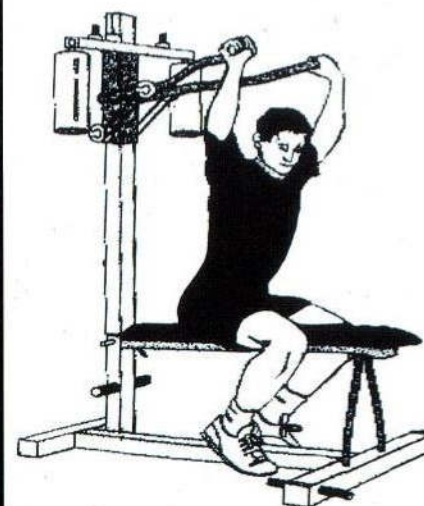
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STATISTICALLY SPEAKING

DON YATES

Tonight's visitors to Boundary Park are the Cowboys of North Queensland who were formed as recently as 1995 and play out of Stockland Stadium, Townsville. They had a difficult opening season when they won only two matches and suffered several heavy defeats, the heaviest being a 66-4 hammering against Canterbury in August 1995. Last season they showed considerable improvement but still won only six matches. Nevertheless the Cowboys continued to pull in the crowd with 27,096 being attracted to the Cowboys v. South Sydney match last July which Souths won 22-20.

This season the Cowboys have again struggled and they find themselves at the foot of the table. However, they are a match for anyone on their day as was seen last May when they forced a 20-20 draw away at Brisbane Broncos. It must be said that their three World Club Championship victories have been by wider margins than any other victory in their short history and their club record victory is now the 54-16 defeat of Oldham last month. It will be interesting to see if, during their stay in England, they can improve on their biggest away win which is currently their 24-14 win over the Gold Coast last July.

DETAILS OF OLDHAM'S LAST WIN AGAINST THE KANGAROOS

Wednesday, 7th November 1956

At Watersheddings

OLDHAM 21 AUSTRALIA 2 Attendance 8,458

OLDHAM Tries Frank Pitchford, John Etty & Derek Turner
Goals Bernard Ganley (6)
Australia goal Cyril Connell

OLDHAM: Bernard Ganley, Terry O'Grady, Dennis Ayers, Alan Davies, John Etty, Frank Stirrup, Frank Pitchford, Ken Jackson, Jack Keith, Don Vines, Sid Little, Charlie Winslade & Derek Turner.

AUSTRALIA: Clive Churchill, Kevin O'Brian, Tom Payne, Alex Watson, Des McGovern, Bobby Banks, Cyril Connell, Roy Bull Kearney, Bill Marsh, Tom Tyquin, Don Furner & Kel O'Shea.

Oldham got off to a flying start when David Hobbs landed a penalty in the first minute as the Roughyeds matched the Kangaroos during a fiery opening quarter. The first scrum broke up in mayhem with fists flying in all directions. As a result Mick Worrall and Paul Sjerma together with Kangaroo forwards Martin Bella and Steve Folkes were dispatched to the sin bin. Shortly after their return Australia drew level when Mike O'Connor landed a penalty. The two packs continued to hammer at each other but it was half-back Terry Lamb who was involved in the decisive action on the half-hour. During a two minute spell the popular stand-off crossed for two tries both converted by Mike O'Connor to take the score to 4-2. Against such opposition most clubs would have folded but the Roughyeds were far from beaten and before the interval Colin Halkyard scored for Mick Worrall to convert and leave Oldham well in contention at half-time with the score at 14-8. After the break Oldham continued to press. The stubborn Kangaroo defence stood firm but Mick Worrall twice landed penalties so as the match moved into its final quarter a vulnerable looking Australia led by only 14-12. Kangaroo skipper Ben Elias was enjoying a tremendous evening so it was perhaps fitting that it was he who scrambled over for a try on the hour and then made the decision break ten minutes later which led to a try from scrum-half Greg Alexander. In the dying seconds Stuart Raper put Des Foy over to complete the scoring. Oldham had played magnificently against World class opponents and although beaten 22-16 they had the consolation of restricting Australia to the lowest winning margin on that historic tour.

RESULTS OF ALL OLDHAM

MATCHES AGAINST THE

KANGAROOS

December 1908			
Oldham	11	Australia	5
November 1911			
Oldham	14	Australia	8
November 1921			
Oldham	5	Australia	16
January 1922			
Oldham	15	Australia	5
November 1929			
Oldham	10	Australia	18
September 1933			
Oldham	6	Australia	38
January 1934			
Oldham	5	Australia	38
November 1937			
Oldham	6	Australia	10
December 1948			
Oldham	7	Australia	27
September 1952			
Oldham	7	Australia	7
November 1956			
Oldham	21	Australia	2
October 1959			
Oldham	14	Australia	25
October 1963			
Oldham	4	Australia	12
November 1967			
Oldham	8	Australia	18
October 1973			
Oldham	10	Australia	44
November 1975			
Oldham	10	Australia	20
November 1986			
Oldham	16	Australia	22

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The prize includes two tickets to the World Club Championship final on October 18, and £500 spending money. Normal Times Newspapers Ltd competition rules apply, available on request. The winner will be notified by post.

*No purchase necessary. You can still enter the draw by sending your name and address on a postcard to:
Rugby Competition, TNL Competitions Dept, 1, Virginia Street, London E1 9BD. Entries must be received by first post Monday August 18th, 1997.

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- 7.00 - 7.25 BRAZILIANT (LOCAL SAMBA BAND)
- 7.30 - MATCH TO COMMENCE

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COWBOYS IN THE COMMUNITY

A Benchmark for Britain



The Super League XXXX Cowboys are part of the North Queensland community.

The Super League XXXX Cowboys receive outstanding community support and the players and the organisation put this back into North Queensland through a range of avenues.

As well as their sponsor commitments, the players conduct regular visits to the Cleveland Youth Centre and have taken on roles promoting a range of community organisations. They are popular visitors to the Cleveland Youth Centre and have taken on roles promoting a range of community organisations and projects, including SunSmart for the Cancer Fund, the Cootharinga Society and a range of other charity and children's organisations.

Wherever possible the Super League Cowboys players travel around the North Queensland region visiting schools and community organisations. The players are being developed as role models for the younger generation and outstanding examples of what can be achieved through commitment, dedication and determination.

The club's junior development program is ongoing, promoting the importance for rugby league and sport in a healthy lifestyle for young North Queenslanders.

In late 1995 the XXXX Cowboys established the Cowboys Community Foundation under the banner of the Queensland Community Foundation. The club contributed \$30,000 to the

fund during its inaugural year with the first series of grants issued early in 1996 and this will continue in 1997. The aim of the foundation is to help, particularly those smaller organisations and charities in the community, who assist those most in need.

While the Cowboys receive around 100 letters a month asking for smaller donations, the Cowboys Community Foundation allows the Cowboys to make more significant contributions to organisations.

The Cowboys are also building a close working relationship with James Cook University (JCU) through a number of avenues.

One is the Cowboys sponsorship of the North Queensland Cowboys Honours Research Awards promoting research into sport exercise through a program underway between the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and JCU.

This information is a major factor in the development of the Australian game being at a much more advanced stage. They have realised that support is a reciprocal process, not just something clubs should take for granted.

The idea for a national North Queensland based rugby league team surfaced in 1989 after 16,000 people turned out to watch the Brisbane Broncos play the Parramatta Eels in a Panasonic Cup quarter final in Townsville.

The response was so great the idea of basing a national rugby league side in the north was born, and later that year a formal committee was in place

working towards the bid.

Years of toil by a few North Queenslanders and they were rewarded for their tenacity with the entry of a North Queensland team into the Winfield Cup's 20 team competition in late 1992.

It was helped along by the support of a petition signed by 30,000 North Queenslanders and promises of support from major companies, public sector organisations and politicians. On March 11, 1995 when the team ran on to Stockland Stadium for their first game against the Sydney Bulldogs, it would mark the start of an inaugural year which would exceed all expectations.

While on the paddock the club hoped for more wins, the public of North Queensland showed unprecedented support for a sporting organisation, flocking to home games and making the club's merchandise the second highest seller in the league.

The 238,734 people who attended the 11 home games in the club's inaugural year, and the professional presentation of the organisation were high points for the Cowboys in 1995.

Other features of the inaugural year included the first win against Illawarra and the first home win against Wests at Stockland Stadium in Round 15.

On October 18, 1995 the club announce a joint venture with News Limited. It resulted in a \$5.5 million injection of funds and allowed the major \$6.5 million redevelopment of Stockland Stadium.

At the commencement of the 1996 season the club boasted the best rugby

league player facilities in Australia in the middle of one of the strongest supporter bases in the competition. The ongoing improvement saw the club win six games in their second year and well on the way to being a premier performer as the Super League competition kick-off loomed in 1997.

The first class stadium, able to seat 11,000 and house 31,500 people, and totally integrated player training and rehabilitation facilities, now provide the centrepiece of a growing club which is earmarked as a club set to be one of the premier performers of the future.

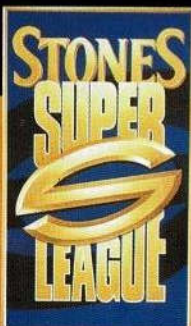
This is in part due to the immense community support, along with the impact of 1996 head coach Graham Lowe and the legacy of coaching leadership which continues in 1997 with Tim Sheens taking over the reins. Sheens is recognised as a modern day pioneer of the game of rugby league and will be the base around which the Super League Cowboys will develop their truly professional playing and administration structure in the coming years.

The focus will remain on developing the juniors and growing young Super League Cowboys to fill the teams of the future.

In 1997 the Super League Cowboys are aiming to set the standard in player professionalism and overall presentation, giving the public of North Queensland not only a team to support, but a team to admire.



TOP OF THE LEAGUE



TASTE THE ACTION

ON THIS DAY...

DON YATES

recalling this day in history

Before introduction of summer rugby, July was the month when the only rugby action involving British players took place on tours to the other side of the World.

It was on this day in 1914, Saturday 18th July, that Great Britain met Hawkes Bay in Napier, New Zealand. The Lions won easily enough 30-7 with Willie Davies (Leeds) crossing for a hat-trick of tries.

Seventy years later, on Wednesday 18th July 1984, the Lions were back in New Zealand, this time in Wellington where they beat the Central Districts 38-6. Oldham's Terry Flanagan was in the second-row for Britain that evening.

Two years ago it was the BARLA under-18's who were in New Zealand. Their results were not so successful and on Tuesday 18th July 1995 they were beaten 18-12 by Manawatu in Palmerston North.

It was on this day in 1964, Saturday 18th July, that Australia completed a

whitewash of test victories over the touring French side. The Kangaroos won this third test 35-9 at Sydney Cricket Ground where winger Ken Irvine crossed for two tries as well as landing seven goals.

Twenty-eight years previously, on Saturday 18th July, Great Britain met Australia in a deciding test match at Sydney Cricket Ground. It was a typically torrid test in which Ray Stehr (Australia) and Jack Arkwright (Britain) were sent off but the Lions clinched the test series with a 12-7 victory. Barney Hudson, one of five Salford backs in the British line-up, scored the first try, Stan Brogden (Leeds) scored the second and Martin Hodgson (Swinton) landed three goals. Vic Hey (try) and Dave Brown (two goals), two players who later moved to British clubs, were the Australian scorers.

One of the most famous clubs in Australia are St. George who won the Australian Premiership on eleven consecutive seasons between 1956

and 1966. Because of their dominance of the Australian domestic game, in 1962 they were awarded a match against the touring British Lions. That match was switched from their Kogarah Jubilee Oval ground (capacity 24,000) to Sydney Cricket Ground and on Wednesday, 18th July 1962 a crowd of 57,895 attended the match. Great Britain silenced the multitude, winning 33-5.

It was on Wednesday, 18th July 1984 that Halifax signed centre Tony Anderson from Eastern Suburbs, the Sydney club who now play under the name of Sydney City. Anderson made 145 appearances for Halifax and scored 66 tries before transferring to Oldham for £70,000 in March 1990. Finally, it was way back on 18th July 1896 that the first sod of grass was laid at Boundary Park, then the new ground of the Oldham Association football & Athletic Club, later renamed Oldham Athletic and the current hosts of the Oldham Rugby League Football Club.

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JUNIOR BEARS



Well hello there

Junior Bears,

Here we are again back 'home' at Boundary Park for a historic match against the North Queensland Cowboys from Australia.

We welcome here tonight all players, officials and supporters who may have travelled hear with their team from down under, lets wish them "g'day" to one and all.

Queensland is one of the eight Territories of Australia and is the home of The Gold Coast and The Great Barrier Reef. Like the rest of the Country it gets loads of Sunshine, I wonder if our Northern British weather will suit most of these players. We shall have to see how they perform tonight...

By now you should have all received your letter about both Failsworth and Oldham Carnivals. Lets have a big turn out for both events...

Failsworth is tomorrow with a 12.30 meet at Lord Lane, and the Oldham event is next Saturday (26th) with a 12.30 meet at the field on Kings Road, look out for members of the Junior Bears Committee, (Those you see at our meetings) and they will let you know where our float will be starting from. Please wear home or away kits if you haven't got them don't worry just turn up in 'red and white', please under no circumstances come to any of these events alone, once you have reported in then any parents/adults who do not wish

to come along the route with us, will be notified where to collect you. As Bob Lindner asked you all at our last meeting. Who are we going to be cheering for this evening, what do we shout...

Come on OLDHAM,

Come on OLDHAM

Let's show them 'Aussies'

what we can really do...

Answers to the teasers set in the Sheffield programme...

Q. Name the last Coach at the 'Eagles'

A. Phil Larder

Q. Name one of the Sheffield players who now plays for 'Leeds Rhinos'

A. Ryan Sheridan. Anthony Farrell and Marcus Varsillicopulus (not sure how you spell that!!)

Q. Who was the first coach of Sheffield Eagles

A. Gary Hetherington

Only a couple of teasers for you tonight

1. Who is coach of North Queensland Cowboys

2. What was the score in the first meeting between the two clubs?

Mascot for this first match in our home fixtures of the World Club Championship is eleven year old



Oikki Chatterley

Vikki attends The Radclyffe School in Chadderton.

Her favourite player is newcomer Luke Goodwin, will he feel at home today with the rest of those 'Aussie' accents all around him, lets hope so, and that it brings out the 'best' in him.

Vikki enjoys drawing as well as watching the 'bears' play.

Junior Bears who will be celebrating their birthdays this week are.

July 20th	Nick Palmer
	Michelle Richardson
July 21st	Katie Stephens
July 23rd	Steven Leach
July 24th	Cassie Stafford

Happy Birthday Junior Bears!!!!

Next Friday sees the second of our 'home' fixtures in the Championship against Adelaide Rams, and it's on T.V. don't stay in and watch, come down to Boundary Park and enjoy the game...

Let's make the noise for our big 'Bears' let's show the world that we CAN 'GROWL'...

Come on, Come on OLDHAM

Enjoy the match. See you all later...

Buster

Be there - see the Bear!

HERE AND THERE

DON YATES

In the wake of the disastrous results of English clubs in the World Club Championship, the rugby Football League have set up an enquiry under the chairmanship of Joe Lydon. The League Management are determined to raise standards in this country so that British clubs can, in future, enter this tournament with a realistic chance of success.

Having watched a number of World Championship matches in Europe I do not consider that the difference in playing strengths is as great as at first they appear. Generally speaking, I do not think that the Australian players are any faster than the Europeans, nor do I consider that they are any more powerful or that they tackle any better. The big difference seems to be that the Australians show more intelligence than the Europeans. They seem more aware tactically and, as a result, take up better field positions thereby making themselves look faster, fitter and stronger.

In order for our players to match the high standards of their Australian counterparts, they must participate in a similarly intense competition. During the past fifteen years or so, the Australians have had one distinct advantage over the Europeans. The advantage is the intense competition provided by their State of Origin competition which provides three matches where the competition is as intense as any International match. Unfortunately for Britain we do not have a competition which provides such an intense competition. The War of the Roses matches which were set up some time ago lacked the passion generated by the State of Origin clashes. In addition to that our matches against the French have not grounded the fierce competition which the fired-up New Zealanders provide when they take on the Kangaroos.

It is essential that we set a similar high intensity set of fixtures to test the mettle of our leading players. The game in France is suffering at the moment and the demise of the South Wales club was a hefty bodyblow to the game in Wales. What a tremendous difference it would make to the general standard of our play if we could complete in a European Championship involving England, France and Wales if the passion generated was equal to that of the State of Origin.

The League Management are making determined efforts to set the game up in both Ireland and Scotland and they are to be congratulated for that but we must continue to give every assistance to both Wales and France. International competition is the pinnacle of sporting achievement and as such it must be encouraged vigorously. In recent years the Australian Rugby League have worked wonders in such places as Papua New Guinea, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Western Somea and Tonga as well as building up the run down New Zealand game. We must follow their example in the Northern Hemisphere. The team who are working with Joe Lydon are almost exclusively from Europe and I was a little dissappointed that the working party did not include a leading administrator from Australia.

Nevertheless, we must not criticise at this stage because I am sure that we will eventually pull back the Australians. Until then we will just have to sit back and enjoy their skills, starting this evening with the visit of the North Queensland Cowboys.

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The Right Choice





The Bear Facts Super League '97

Rd	Date	Team	Venue	Time	Score	Att
1	Sun 16th March	Leeds Rhinos	A	3pm	L 32-22	11,516
2	Fri 21st March	Bradford Bulls	H	7.30	L 30-18	5461
3	Fri 28th March	Salford Reds	(A)	3pm	L 35-26	5295
4	Tues 1st April	London Broncos	(H)	7.30pm	L 32-22	3556
5	Sun 6th April	Warrington Wolves	(A)	3pm	L 28-18	5370
6	Sun 13th April	Paris St Germain (BSKYB)	(H)	6.35pm	W 19-18	3396
7	Sun 20th April	Wigan Warriors	(A)	3pm	L 44-10	7885
8	Sun 27th April	Halifax Blue Sox	(H)	3pm	L 30-29	4236
9	Sun 11th May	Sheffield Eagles	(A)	3.15pm	W 18-14	4245
10	Sun 18th May	Leeds Rhinos	(H)	3pm	L 43-26	4500
11	Fri 23rd May	Bradford Bulls	(A)	7.30pm	L 42-28	13,262
12	Mon 26th May	Salford Reds	(H)	3pm	L 10-19	4254
13	Fri 30th May	Castleford	(H)	7.30pm	D 12-12	3667
14	Sun 29th June	St Helens	(H)	3pm	L 30-34	
15	Sun 6th July	Sheffield Eagles	(H)	3pm	L 20-21	2168
16	Fri 11th July	Castleford Tigers	(A)	7.30pm		
17	Fri 18th July	Queensland Cowboys	(H)	7.30pm		
18	Fri 25th July	Adelaide Rams	(H)	7.30pm		
19	Tue 5th Aug	London Broncos	(A)	7.30pm		
20	Sun 10th Aug	St Helens	(A)	6pm		
21	Sun 17th Aug	Halifax Blue Sox	(A)	3pm		
22	Fri 22nd Aug	Wigan Warriors	(H)	7.30pm		
23	Tues 26th Aug	Paris St Germain	(A)			
24	Sun 31st Aug	Warrington Wolves	(H)	3pm		

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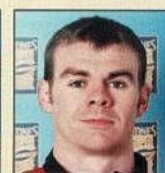
Number 2
Scott Ranson



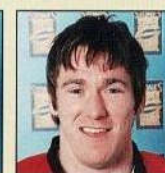
Number 3
Darren Abram



Number 4
Paul Topping



Number 5
Rob Myler



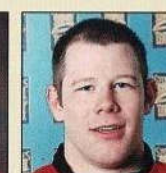
Number 6
Francis Maloney



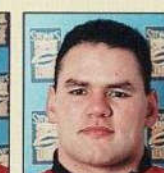
Number 7
Martin Crompton
Ashton Foods



Number 8
Ian Gildart



Number 9
John Clarke



Number 10
Jason Temu
Samantha Brown



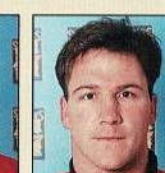
Number 11
Gary Lord



Number 12
Joe Faimalo



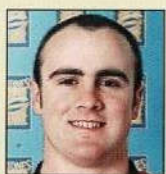
Number 13
David Bradbury



Number 14
Matt Munro



Number 15
Paul Davidson



Number 16
Howard Hill



Number 17



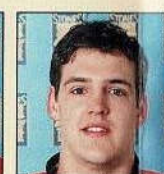
Number 18
Mike Neal



Number 19
Chris McKinney



Number 20
Afi Leuila



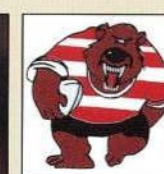
Number 21
Jim Cowan



Number 22
Vince Fawcett



Number 23
Brett Goldspink



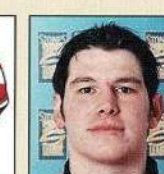
Number 24



Number 25
Paul Deacon



Number 26
Luke Goodwin



Number 27
David Stephenson



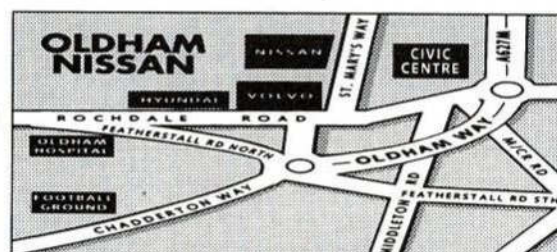
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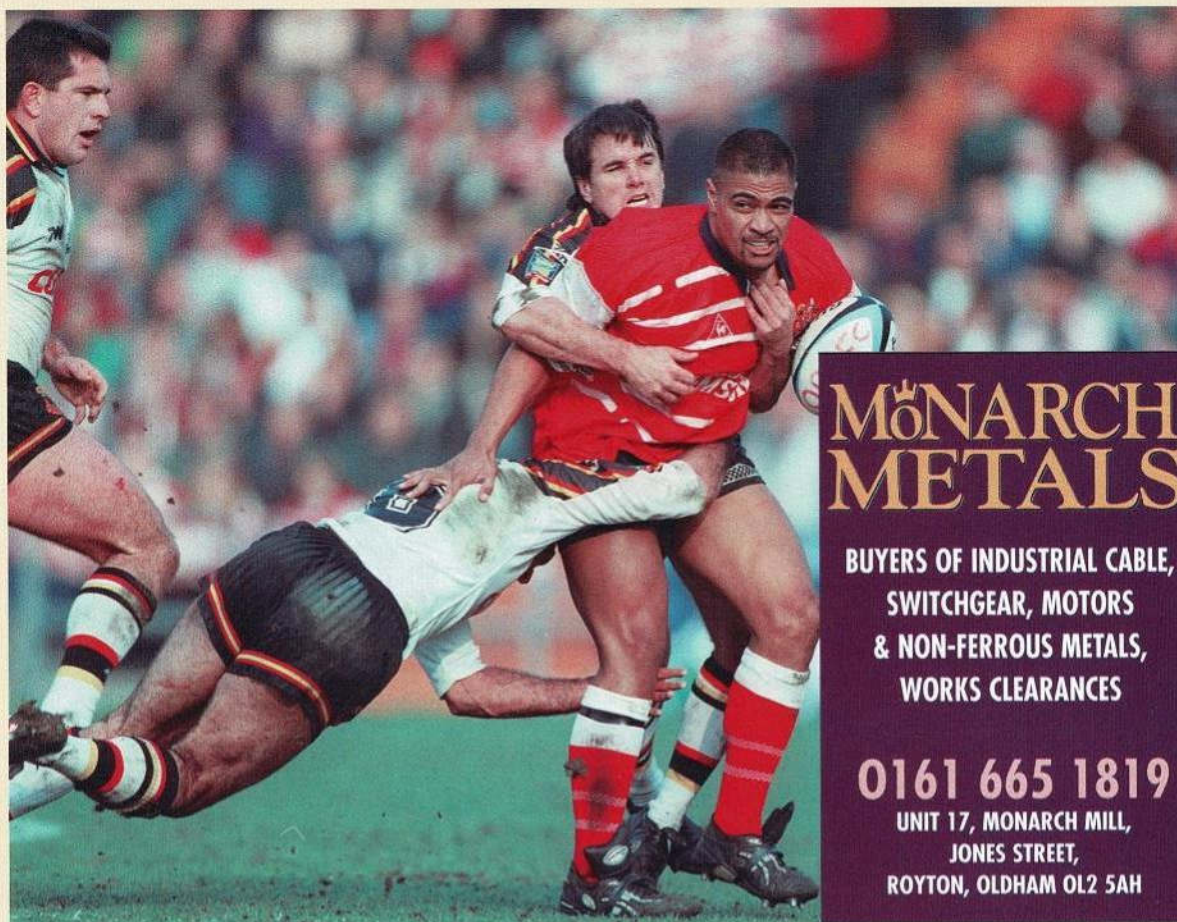
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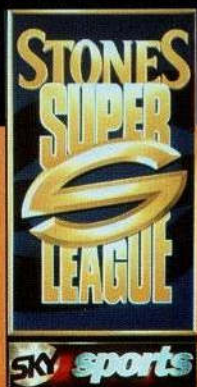
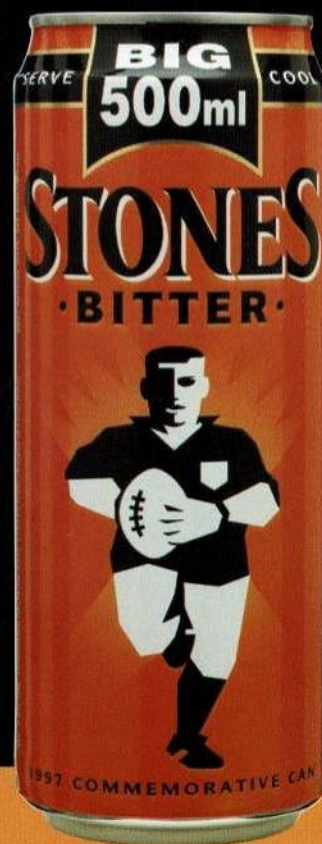


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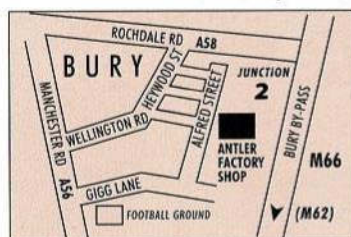
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ALLIANCE NEWS

PADDY KIRWAN

The last home game at Hyde, against Castleford saw the return after injury of Greg Burns at hooker and Paul Norman at prop. With Myler, Scott Ramson and Chris McKinney in the side the team on paper was the strongest Alliance side we have put out since Bradford away in the middle of May.

Although the Hyde ground is a neat, tidy, ground with a superb playing surface it is not in the ideal location. It is not easy to get to in rush hour traffic on Thursday evenings and is awkward to find from the M62 as Castleford found turning up at 7.15 for a 7.30 kick-off. In the end the game kicked off at 7.45, but it must be in everyone's interest, the officials, players, opposing teams and most importantly the spectators, that we find a permanent home for the club which includes all the teams.

When the game kicked off we gave away two successive penalties allowing Castleford to convert the second and go into a 2-0 lead. We then hit back

strongly we good play by Deacon, McKinney and Myler allowing Joe McNicholas the space to squeeze in at the corner. The early try gave Joe the confidence to go on and produce by far his best performance of the season. The early try was followed up by an opportunist drop goal by Simon Svaioic after 12 minutes to push our lead to 5 - 2.

Over the next twenty minutes we controlled the ball well and worked really hard on defence but poor kicking on the last tackle and failure to find touch from a penalty meant most of this period was spent in our own half. Sustained pressure from Castleford force a try on our left hand side to give them a 6-5 lead. I hit back just before half time when a set move allowed Gary Burns to find Aidie Mear running straight and hard into a hole in the Castleford defence to score 10 yards to the right of the posts. Paul Deacon converted to give an interval scoreline of 11-6.

In the second half we started

well and went further in front when a high kick from Paul Deacon was by the Castleford winger and the Oldham Rugby Union Winger John Webster joined up to score a try converted by Paul Deacon. Castleford showing their pedigree as a top three side then hit back, but were aided by a 6-0 penalty count in the 2nd half. They score two tries and a conversion to bring the score to 17-16 with five minutes remaining. the run of his previous decisions the referee gave us an solitary penalty in the dying minutes which turned defence into attack. On the resulting of six Paul Deacon crowned an outstanding game to break through draw the full back and Paul Norman over for the match winning try. Deacon converted for a final score 23-16.

Chris McKinney, Gary Briggs, and Danny Guest good games but Jimmy Cowan, Paul Deacon and Joe McNicholas were outstanding.

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ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

1997

JULY

THURSDAY 3rd FEATHERSTONE ROVERS(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 10th CASTLEFORD TIGERS (H) 7.30pm
FRIDAY 18th HULL KINGSTON ROVERS (A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 31st HULL (H) 8.00pm

AUGUST

THURSDAY 7th St HELENS (H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 14th HALIFAX BLUE SOX (H) 7.30pm
WEDNESDAY 20th WIGAN WARRIORS (A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 28th WARRINGTON WOLVES(A) 7.30pm

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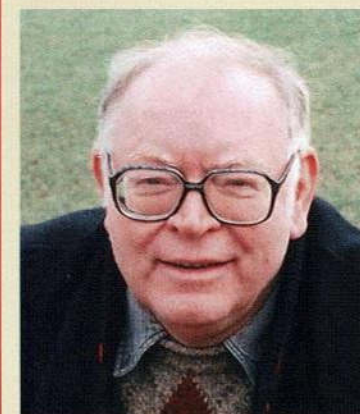


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OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

ROGER HALSTEAD



Flying back from Australia after Oldham's games with Townsville and Adelaide in the World Club Championships I stumbled across one of the main reasons why our game in this country is years behind the game Down Under.

I suspect we were somewhere over Tibet or Afghanistan. I was engrossed in one of my Father's Day gifts: the joint autobiography of Aussie stars Bradley Clyde (?) and Laurie Daley.

Both came from relatively humble backgrounds in the vast interior of New South Wales. And both played League from the day they first stepped into primary school at the age of five or six. Soccer wasn't on the agenda. In winter, it was League or Aussie rules for the toddlers. Most preferred League and, even at that early age, dreamed of the day they would play for the Raiders or the Sea Eagles.

We can safely assume that every young boy in New South Wales and Queensland handles a rugby ball from soon after they discard their nappies.

And in much the same way that the majority of primary school boys in this country dream of playing soccer for Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal or the likes, so the Aussie kids from Cairns to Cantima think only of playing for the Cowboys, the Raiders or the big clubs in Sydney.

Even if you isolate Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cumbria from the rest of the UK, in a similar way to how I have picked out Queensland and New South Wales from the rest of Australia, you still cannot believe that most kids prefer League to soccer.

When we try to compare League in Australia, therefore with League in the UK the first thing we must deduce is that it is an uneven contest.

League in this country, whether we like it or not as enthusiasts of the sport, is a minority sport which has a similar status to that of soccer in Australia.

And we all know what would happen if the top dozen or so Australian soccer

clubs came to England to have a crack at Tottenham, Man. United etc. Not even Terry Venables could address the balance there.

The Australians have been full-time professionals for several years and the game receives as much coverage in the media as soccer does here. It is a massive business attracting enormous sponsorship and corporate backing.

You need only to look at the Leagues clubs at Parramatta or Penrith to get an idea of what League in Australia is all about.

Of course it has been ripped apart in the last 12 months by the ARL versus Super League row, but once compromise is reached and the warring factions smoke the pipe of peace - as they certainly will - the Aussie game will close ranks once more and go from strength to strength.

The only thing that surprised me about the English defeats in the first phase of the World Championship was the fact that the game here was shocked by them. We can be competitive now at Test level because no matter how strong a county is it can only have 13 players on the field at once.

But haven't we always recognised that the Aussies could probably pick three or four teams to give us a run? Accept that and it naturally follows that they will be stronger all round at club level.



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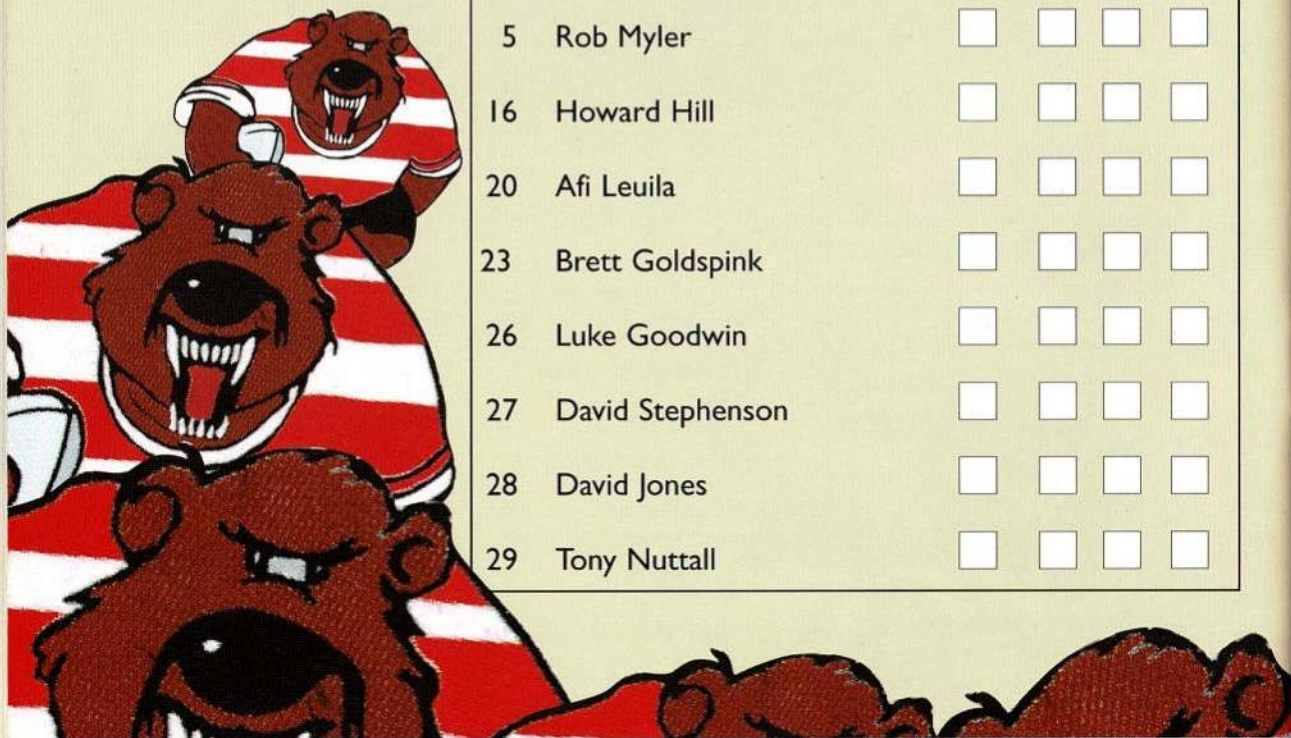
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PENALTIES					
1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

		Team	T	G	DG
1	Kyle Warren	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Kris Tassell	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Paul Bowman	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Jason Ryan	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Justin Loomans	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Andrew Dunemann	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Jason Ferris	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	John Lomax	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Jason Death	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Martin Locke	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Aaron Ketchell	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Tyran Smith	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	Owen Cunningham	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Reggie Cressbrook	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	John Buttigieg	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	Adam Warwick	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	Luke Scott	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	Jason Adams	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	Paul Galea	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	Mark Shipway	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	Scott Mahon	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	Ian Dunemann	☐	☐	☐	☐
24	John Doyle	☐	☐	☐	☐
25	Dion Cope	☐	☐	☐	☐
26	Michael Coorey	☐	☐	☐	☐
27	Glen Murphy	☐	☐	☐	☐
28	Luke Phillips	☐	☐	☐	☐
29	Kelly Egan	☐	☐	☐	☐
30	Bert Tabuai	☐	☐	☐	☐
31	Ian Roberts	☐	☐	☐	☐
32	Marshall Miller	☐	☐	☐	☐
33	Cameron McNab	☐	☐	☐	☐
34	Ray Mercy	☐	☐	☐	☐
35	John Skardon	☐	☐	☐	☐
38	Jim Ahmat	☐	☐	☐	☐
40	Liam Johnson	☐	☐	☐	☐
41	Shane Vincent	☐	☐	☐	☐
45	Nathan Bourke	☐	☐	☐	☐
49	Steve Walters	☐	☐	☐	☐

PENALTIES					
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7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

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